

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----129052 131500Z /40

O 131359Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4158
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NY
USMISSION SINAI

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 8856

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR IS EG US
SUBJ: ISRAELI OBJECTIVES AT LONDON CONFERENCE

1. SUMMARY: THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WILL SEND MOSHE DAYAN TO LONDON WITH THE GREATEST SKEPTICISM THAT ANYTHING FRUITFUL WILL EMERGE FROM THE MEETING. DAYAN EXPECTS KAMEL TO REFRAIN FROM A SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUES. IF KAMEL IS WILLING TO TALK, DAYAN WILL TRY TO STAKE OUT THE DIMENSIONS OF THE EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATING POSITION. HE WILL ASK ONCE AGAIN WHETHER EGYPT IS PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE AND CONCLUDE A TREATY WITH ISRAEL CONCERNING THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. HE MAY FOCUS SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR A TIME ON MUTUAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS. THE ISRAELIS MAY FEEL THAT
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THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO NEGOTIATING WITH THE AMERICANS IN LONDON THAN WITH THE EGYPTIANS. THIS EMPHASIS WILL BE MEANT TO SHOW US THE ERROR OF OUR WAYS AND DEFLECT US FROM THE PATH THE ISRAELIS ARE SURE WE HAVE CHOSEN. THE SUSPICION OF THE US IS SUCH AT THE MOMENT THAT DAYAN AND CO. WILL GO TO LONDON WITH A SENSE OF MORE GLOOM AND A PREDISPOSITION TO BELIEVE THAT THEY WILL BE IN

ONE CORNER AND EGYPT AND THE US WILL BE IN THE OTHER. END
SUMMARY

2. THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WILL SEND MOSHE DAYAN TO LONDON EARLY NEXT WEEK WITH THE GREATEST SKEPTICISM THAT ANYTHING FRUITFUL WILL EMERGE FROM THE MEETING. THE PERCEIVED COMBINATION OF EGYPTIAN INTRANSIGENCE AND AMERICAN MANIPULATION WILL, IN ISRAELI EYES, INEVITABLY PRODUCE A DEADLOCK IN LONDON, WHICH IN TURN WILL NECESSITATE THE TABLING OF AMERICAN PROPOSALS. SO MUCH SUSPICION EXISTS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ABOUT THE PRESENT AMERICAN ROLE IN THE PEACE PROCESS THAT THE ISRAELIS WILL BE SNIFFING THE CORRIDORS OF THE CHURCHILL HOTEL FOR THE SLIGHTEST SCENT THAT CAIRO AND WASHINGTON HAVE PRE-ARRANGED AN OUTCOME DESTRUCTIVE TO ISRAELI INTERESTS.

3. BECAUSE OF THIS PERCEPTION, DAYAN EXPECTS KAMEL TO STICK TO HIS CATECHISM AND REFRAIN FROM A SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUES. IF HE DOES, THE GOI WILL SEE THE LONDON MEETING AS PRINCIPALLY A PROPAGANDA EXERCISE AND WILL SEEK TO WIN THE RHETORICAL BATTLE. HOW CAN THEY BE EXPECTED TO NEGOTIATE, THEY WILL ASK, WHEN SADAT'S ERRAND BOY CAN ONLY CEASELESSLY REPEAT THIS HARD-LINE PROPOSAL?

4. BUT THE ISRAELIS WILL BE READY TO BE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED. IF KAMEL, CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS, SHOWS THE
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LEAST WILLINGNESS TO MORE THAN JUST RECITE THE EGYPTIAN PLAN, DAYAN WILL FIRST TRY TO STAKE OUT THE DIMENSIONS OF THE EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATING POSITION. HE WILL BE ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN WHETHER KAMEL HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED BY SADAT TO EXPLORE THE AUTONOMY PROPOSAL AND THE EGYPTIAN PLAN IN DEPTH AND WHETHER HE WILL BE ABLE TO DISCUSS SOME OF THE IDEAS SADAT HAS PRESENTED IN PRIVATE TALKS WITH THE US AND WEIZMAN.

5. DAYAN WILL UNDOUBTEDLY ALSO BE ASKING ONCE AGAIN WHETHER EGYPT IS PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE AND CONCLUDE REPEAT CONCLUDE A TREATY WITH ISRAEL CONCERNING THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. IF THE ANSWER IS FUZZY, DAYAN WILL PROBABLY HAVE THE ISRAELI PRESS IN HIS EARS A FEW MINUTES LATER.

6. MOVING ON FROM HERE, DAYAN WILL TRY TO MAINTAIN FOCUS ON THE AUTONOMY PLAN AS THE BASIS FOR DISCUSSION. HE WILL EXPLAIN THAT EVERYTHING IS NEGOTIABLE, THAT ISRAEL HAS NEVER SAID IT WOULD NOT CHANGE ITS AUTONOMY SCHEME, AND THAT IN ANY EVENT THE PLAN CALLS FOR A FUNDAMENTAL REVIEW IN FIVE YEARS. DAYAN'S GLOSS WILL BE SHINY.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4159
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
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EXDIS

7. IN DEALING WITH THE EGYPTIAN PLAN, WE WOULD EXPECT HIM TO BEGIN BY REJECTING THE PROPOSALS FOR COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL AND PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION. AT WORST, HE WILL BE AS CUTTING AS MEIR ROSENNE WAS IN HIS JULY 11 PUBLIC COMMENTS. AT BEST, DAYAN MAY FOCUS HIS SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR A TIME ON MUTUAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS. IF THINGS ARE GOING WELL, HE MAY PRESS FOR CAIRO'S IDEA ON WHAT THESE ARRANGEMENTS INVOLVE. IF HE CAN GET KAMEL TALKING, DAYAN WILL TRY TO DRAW OUT OF HIM AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE, LEAVING WELL ASIDE BROAD GENERALIZATIONS AND PRINCIPLES. ASIDE FROM DETAILS ON THE SECURITY ISSUES, DAYAN COULD ALSO PROBE KAMEL'S WILLINGNESS TO DEAL WITH SPECIFIC QUESTIONS SUCH AS JEWS LIVING ON THE WEST BANK, LAND PURCHASES AND ARABS FROM THE TERRITORIES WORKING IN SECRET

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ISRAEL.

8. BUT GIVEN THE CURRENT ATMOSPHERE HERE, THE ISRAELIS MAY WELL FEEL THAT THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO NEGOTIATING WITH THE AMERICANS IN LONDON THAN WITH THE EGYPTIANS IF THEY ARE TO FORESTALL THE WORST. DAYAN WILL TRY TO CONVINCE US THAT HE IS MAKING THE BEST OF THE OPPORTUNITY OF DIRECT TALKS. HE COULD WELL TRY TO PUT THE EGYPTIANS IN THE WORST POSSIBLE LIGHT. IN DOING THIS, DAYAN MAY EMPHASIZE THE DEFICIENCIES THAT KAMEL COULD SHOW IN LONDON - INFLEXIBILITY, RIGIDITY, ETC. - AND THE OMISSIONS IN THE EGYPTIAN PLAN - NO MENTION OF PEACE AND ITS FAILURE TO INCORPORATE THE ASWAN FORMULA. ALL THIS WILL BE MEANT TO SHOW US THE ERROR OF OUR WAYS AND DEFLECT US FROM THE PATH THE ISRAELIS ARE SURE WE HAVE CHOSEN.

9. DAYAN AND KAMEL WILL HAVE A DIFFERENT VIEW OF THE SECRETARY'S ROLE IN THE CONFERENCE. WE WOULD GUESS THE EGYPTIANS WILL BE TRYING TO ESTABLISH A UNITED FRONT WITH THE SECRETARY ACTING AS THEIR SPOKESMAN. SUSPICIOUS THAT THIS WILL HAPPEN, DAYAN COULD INVITE INVIDIOUS COMPARISON WITH THE EGYPTIANS BY PRESENTING TO THE SECRETARY A SENSE OF ISRAELI FORTHRIGHTNESS. IN ANY EVENT, THE ISRAELIS WILL WANT THE SECRETARY TO BE A WITNESS TO THEIR FLEXIBILITY AND OPENNESS AND TO THE OPPOSITE TRAITS ON THE PART OF THE EGYPTIANS. IF THEY CAN MANAGE THIS SORT OF HAPPENING, WE CAN BE SURE THEY WILL PLAY IT BACK AT US AT A LATER DATE DURING CONSULTATIONS ABOUT NEXT STEPS.

10. ALL IN ALL THE ISRAELIS WILL STRESS THAT THEY HAVE A TEAM IN LONDON - DAYAN, BARAK, AND ROSENNE - CAPABLE OF HOLDING SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS. THEY WILL SAY AGAIN AND AGAIN THAT THEY WANT TO DO BUSINESS IF ONLY THE EGYPTIANS
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WOULD. THEY WILL ASK OUR ASSISTANCE IN MELTING EGYPTIAN RIGIDITY AND BLAME US, PRIVATELY AND PERHAPS PUBLICLY, IF WE CANT.

11. IN A SPECIFIC SENSE, OUR OBJECTIVES AND THOSE OF THE ISRAELIS FOR THIS MEETING ARE NOT VERY DIFFERENT. WE BOTH WOULD LIKE THE LONDON CONFERENCE TO PRODUCE AN AGREEMENT TO CONTINUE DIRECT TALKS. ISRAEL WOULD LIKE TO SEE SUCH MEETINGS RESUME WITH THE POLITICAL AND/OR MILITARY COMMITTEE AS THE NEGOTIATING FORUM, BUT WILL AGREE TO ALMOST ANY OTHER FORMAT OF DIRECT TALKS WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS. IN THE CURRENT HEATED DOMESTIC DEBATE HERE REGARDING THE SADAT-PERES MEETING IN VIENNA, THE GOI WILL GO TO MOST ANY LENGTH TO AVOID BEING CHARGED WITH RUPTURING THE DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. THAT WOULD PUT TOO LETHAL A WEAPON IN

PERES' HANDS.

12. AT THIS MEETING APPROACHES, THE GOI FINDS ITSELF
ALMOST ENTIRELY ON THE DEFENSIVE. NO ONE LIKES ITS AUTONOMY
PLAN, SADAT REMAINS THE GREAT PEACEMAKER, WASHINGTON IS
FREQUENTLY DISAPPOINTED WITH ISRAELI POSITIONS, AND NOW THE
OPPOSITION IS EATING AWAY FROM THE INSIDE. THIS HAS PRO-
DUCED A GREAT BITTERNESS IN THE UPPER OFFICES OF THIS GOVERN-
MENT AND CLOSE TO DEFIANCE ON THE PART OF SOME OF ITS
PRINCIPALS. DAYAN IS NOT ONE OF THEM, AND HIS SUPPLENESS
WILL NO DOUBT BE ON DISPLAY IN THE WEST END. BUT THE
SUSPICION OF THE US IS SUCH IN THIS COUNTRY AT THE MOMENT
THAT DAYAN AND COMPANY WILL CERTAINLY BE GOING TO LONDON
WITH A SENSE OF MORE GLOOM AND A POWERFUL PREDISPOSITION
TO BELIEVE THAT WHEN THE BELL GOES AT THE CHURCHILL THEY
WILL BE IN ONE CORNER OF THE RING AND EGYPT AND THE UNITED
STATES WILL BE IN THE OTHER. LEWIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETINGS, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV08856
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780287-0365
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780762/aaaabzst.tel
Line Count: 240
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 97219e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2013785
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ISRAELI OBJECTIVES AT LONDON CONFERENCE
TAGS: PEPR, IS, EG, US, UK, (DAYAN, MOSHE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/97219e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014